

Home Visit Safety in the Age of COVID-19

Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
Thursday, July 29, 2021
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Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health
Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

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Faculty

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Objectives

1. Participants will be able to list 2 things to do prior to a home visit to improve safety.
2. Participants will be able to list 3 things to wear or not to wear during home visits.
3. Participants will be able to list 3 things to do to improve safety while in the home.

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Preparing for the Home Visit

- Follow the sign out protocol for your agency.
 - List the names of the clients/patients you are going to see in the order you plan on visiting them and leave in a designated place.
 - When signing out, also add the estimated time of return.
 - If your return time changes significantly, call your supervisor/designee.



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What to Wear

- Comfortable shoes
- Clothing that allows freedom of movement, preferably wash & wear.
- Clothing that is appropriate for a variety of temperatures.
- Simple jewelry, if any

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What NOT to Wear



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What NOT to Wear

- High heels
- Short skirts, deep necklines, tight clothing – any clothing that may be deemed provocative
- Perfume/aftershave
- Flashy jewelry, even if it isn't expensive
- Any symbols that might be triggering to clients/patients.

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Preparing Your Car

- Make sure the gas tank is full.
- Ensure tires have plenty of air and plenty of tread – check the spare.
- Remove personal items such as decals that might indicate your neighborhood, kids' school, religious organization, etc.

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Preparing Your Car

- Secure all valuables in the trunk before leaving the office.
- Make sure you have a working cell phone charger – keep phone charged.

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Arriving at the Home

- Keep an eye out for groups of people, especially if alcohol/drug use is suspected.



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Arriving at the Home

- Watch for signs such as “no trespassing” or “beware of dog”.



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Arriving at the Home

- Lock doors and keep windows up.
- Park along the street or in an area that allows more than one exit.



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Arriving at the Home

- Use the key fob to lock and unlock the door.
- Keep keys in hand until safely inside the home.

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Arriving at the Home

- If someone approaches you demanding your keys...
 - Use the panic button to draw attention.
 - Throw the keys in one direction and run in the other.

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Arriving at the Home

- Watch where you step – rickety steps, sharp objects, snakes.



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Arriving at the Home

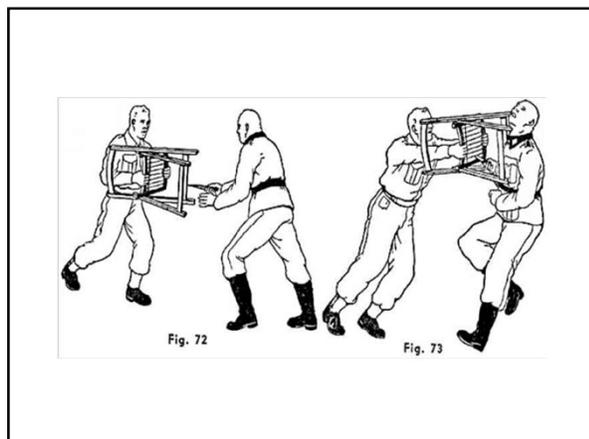
- Always look confident – not scared or lost.
- Wear identification so that it is easily seen.
- Knock confidently and stand to the side of the door, not directly in front of it.
- While waiting, keep eyes and ears open.
 - Arguing coming from inside
 - People approaching
 - Animal sounds
- Step back when the door is opened and always wait to be invited inside.

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Inside the Home

- Try to choose a seat near the exit.
- Try to avoid visiting in bedrooms or kitchens, if possible.
- Scan for additional exits.
- Try to keep your back close to a wall.
- If lighting is poor, ask to turn on additional lights.
- If television/radio/toys are loud, ask if the volume can be turned down.
- If given the option, choose a straight-backed chair over a soft one.

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Inside the Home

- Keep an eye out for infestations.
- Carry only the minimum items necessary for the visit.
- If you can see the stove, scan to ensure that the burners are turned off.

When your patient casually mentions that they have bed bugs

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Other Considerations

- Choose days of the week and times of day based on safety concerns.
 - Avoid Friday afternoon visits
 - School bus routes
 - Shift change at large employers

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Other Considerations

- Be aware of weather conditions.
- Before backing out of a parking space, pull forward a couple of inches before shifting into reverse.

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Resources

- Oregon Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health, “Home Visiting Safety: Staying Safe and Aware on the Job.”

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